

# Alexandria Gazette

VOLUME CX.-NO. 62

ALEXANDRIA, VA. THURSDAY EVENING, MARCH 18, 1909.

PRICE 2 CENTS

## The Farmer's Wife

Is very careful about her churn. She scalds it thoroughly after using, and gives it a sun bath to sweeten it. She knows that if her churn is sour it will taint the butter that is made in it. The stomach is a churn. In the stomach and digestive and nutritive tracts are performed processes which are almost exactly like the churning of butter. Is it not apparent then that if this stomach-churn is foul it makes foul all which is put into it?

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## Alexandria Gazette.

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## A WAR REMINISCENCE.

To the Editor of the Alexandria Gazette: I have read in the Fairfax Herald of March 12th a letter of Charles Bins to reply to Colonel Mosby's letter about Joe Richards, one of his best men, a native of Fairfax, who recently died in Missouri. Colonel Mosby spoke of Joe having been conspicuous in the fight with the California cavalry battalion near Dranesville on the 22d of February 1864, and of Joe's anxiety to capture and kill the aforesaid Bins, his stepfather, who had deserted Mosby's command and was then acting as a guide for their enemies.

It is news to the citizens of Fairfax to hear Bins, deny that he never belonged to Mosby's battalion and that he did not desert from it. There are a number of survivors of it in Fairfax, his neighbors, who know to the contrary. If anybody has any curiosity on the subject let him ask Frank Williams, Ab Wren, James Wren, Phil Lee, Sam Underwood, Lycurgus Hutchinson, Fount Battle, Phil and William Trammell and John P. Oat, also J. W. Hammond, of Alexandria. Colonel Mosby's letter stated that about July 1st, 1863, Joe Richards, French DuLany and some others from about Falls Church, came through the enemy's lines and joined him. At that time he had only one company (A) that had just been organized. There were a good many Fairfax men in it.

The following extract from a dispatch from Captain McCreary to General D. Russell corroborates his statement: It appears in the published records of the war and is dated July 2, 1863. It says: "But I learned this morning that a small party of recruits were organized for the rebel army at a point a few miles from Falls Church and expected to leave tonight." "I have ascertained the following names: Charles Bins, French DuLany, 'Joe' Richards and John Proust." So it appears that although the war had then been going on for two years, and Bins' home was in the midst of his company of the Union army, Captain McCreary had no suspicion that Bins was a Union man, nor any doubt that he had left with a party to join the "rebel army."

Bins certainly did not at that time render any service to the Union cause to entitle him to a pension. Bins' companions served faithfully under Mosby; French DuLany was killed in 1864. There are many now living in Fairfax and Loudoun who will testify that Bins was one of Mosby's men and went on many raids with them, and that no one distrusted his fidelity to his comrades. He served with them over four months until November 1863, and then deserted to the enemy.

With a brother man he had been guilty of an outrage at a farm near Salem, Fauquier, and on the complaint that a mad order was issued for the arrest of Bins and his companion. Bins escaped; the other man was caught but a free because he was too weak-minded to be punished. He died in a lunatic asylum.

Bins' name again appears in the war records on November 17th, 1863, when Colonel Lowell in command of the camp at Vienna, wrote to General Heintzelman:

"The man Bins arrived safely and gives information which leads me to hope that an expedition to start tomorrow will be successful in taking some prisoners."

Bins went as a guide; a number of Mosby's men who had been his friends and comrades were betrayed and made prisoners.

"Oh for a tongue to curse the slave, Whose treason like a deadly blight, Comes o'er the councils of the brave And blasts them in their hour of might. May life's unblest cup for him Be drugged with treacher's to the brim."

Just Prophet, let the damned one dwell, Full in the sight of Paradise, Beholding Heaven, and Feeling Hell."

As long as Bins stayed at home Lowell never discovered how useful he could be; it was only the knowledge he gained in his four months as a member of Mosby's battalion that made him valuable. On November 26th Lowell reported to Heintzelman that "the deserter Bins proved of great assistance. As I wish to employ him again on similar work and as he shows no unwillingness to expose himself, I recommend that he be allowed the same pay as other government scouts while employed." So Lowell put Bins on his pay-roll because he was a deserter.

Again on December 27th Lowell writes to Heintzelman: "The party of 10 mounted and 40 dismounted men of the Thirtieth New York Cavalry under Major Oates with Bins as guide sent out night before last, scouted the country so far as Leesburg and carefully this side of Broad Run. They ascertained houses and brought in 3 prisoners." Bins' name appears in the war records no more. Nobody disputes the fact that Bins' employers got value received for all the money he says they paid him. Again, as soon as hostilities ceased Myer John Scott began to prepare a history of Mosby's Battalion. He spent several weeks in Fairfax collecting information from the actors in the great drama. Bins' conduct was then

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## INDIGESTION?



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## fresh in the minds of Mosby's men, and

he was living in Fairfax; this is Major Scott's conclusion from their testimony in relating the affair on February 22, 1864, near Dranesville, when Bins made such a narrow escape. "This raiding party was guided by Charles Bins, a deserter from Company A, to the federal camp in Fairfax, where he is in great favor with his new friends, or rather employers, by whom he is often sent on expeditions to Mosby's Confederacy."

Scott's book was published two years after the war and was sold by subscription. No doubt there are now many copies in Fairfax. Bins had then returned to his home; he made no protest against it. John Munson was wounded in the fight at Dranesville when Bins ran away like a deer in the woods, crossed the Potomac and never ventured to recross the river, or act as a guide again.

Two years ago Munson published a book, "Recollections of a Mosby Guerrilla." He says, "The Yankees had been pilled on their raid by Charles Bins, a deserter from our command. When the first shot was fired, Charles started to run and was never heard of by the Confederates or our men. It is said that he stopped for one night in Winnsboro to get a bite and then went on towards the North Pole. His name became a by-word in Mosby's command."

Mosby's men would have been glad to exchange the seventy prisoners they took for Bins and to throw into boot the one hundred captured horses. Joe Richards would have claimed the privilege of tying the rope around his stepfather's neck. Bins says he is seventy-seven years old, that he thought the war was over, and asks Colonel Mosby to let him alone. In one sense the war is over, or ought to be, but in another sense it is not and never will be. The Civil war is not over yet. Homer's characters say as familiar names as Lee and Stonewall Jackson; but some are remembered only for their infamy. Bins has no more claim to immortality than other historical deserters whose example he followed. His acts are the fatal shadows that walk by him still. "Tarry thou till I come" was the sentence of immortality pronounced of old as the penalty for a crime from which tradition says this slender ought in vain for respite. Such is the fate of Bins. He prays relief from the furies that haunt him and would be glad to be forgotten and to be forgot. But this boon will be denied him. No matter how often he may ask the grim and ghastly Raven that sits above chamber door—

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Main floor—G st.

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